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# SECURITY SECTOR GOVERNANCE

## NIGERIA DEFECTOR MISSION REPORT

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## NIGERIA DEFECTOR MISSION REPORT

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Security Sector Governance

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# ACRONYMS

<b>BH/ISWAP</b>	Boko Haram/Islamic State in the West Africa Province
<b>CDD</b>	Center for Democracy Development
<b>CVE</b>	Countering Violent Extremism
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration
<b>GON</b>	Government of Nigeria
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>IPCR</b>	Institute of Peace & Conflict Resolution
<b>MOI</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>NACTEST</b>	National Counter Terrorism Strategy
<b>NOA</b>	National Orientation Agency
<b>NSRP</b>	Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme
<b>ONSA</b>	Office of the National Security Advisor
<b>PCNI</b>	Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiatives
<b>RPBA</b>	Recovery and Peace Building Assessment
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCTC</b>	United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VSF</b>	Victims Support Fund

# INTRODUCTION

Responding to an invitation to participate in a national conference organized by the Presidential Committee on Northeast Initiatives (PCNI), and as a follow up from a previous joint UK/US assessment mission on defections in November 2015, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Nigeria deployed one consultant to Nigeria. The work was to last a month to assist USAID's Office of Peace and Democratic Governance team and the Government of Nigeria (GON) in thematic areas of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) including defections and Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) related programing, also know as the "soft approach". Working in close cooperation with USAID staff in Nigeria the consultant is basing this mission report on interviews and meetings as well as publically available data. This report provides a trend overview of the situation related to above-mentioned thematic areas and recommendations.

This report is also based on and follows up on issues previously identified regarding, 'defector' issues such as gaps, implementation risks, entry points and subsequent recommendations<sup>1</sup>. All previous findings are confirmed and are valid today.

Since November 2015 the rapidly evolving environment has been marked by military success in the northeast and the consequent change in tactics of Boko Haram/Islamic State in the West Africa Province (BH/ISWAP). This positive evolution is calling for civilian measures necessary to stabilize these military gains and further pacify the environment and facilitate IDP returns. At the same time the insurgency nature of the crisis remains a critical aspect to be considered in program planning and implementation.

In an effort to develop a strategy on peace building and recovery along with coordinated and coherent assistance to affected people in the Northeast, a joint Recovery and Peace Building Assessment (RPBA) was launched in February 2016 by the GON, the World Bank, the United Nations and the European Union. The RPBA will cover the states of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe.

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<sup>1</sup> Draft Discussion Paper on Defections, USG Internal, SBU, 01/06/2016

Summary, previous recommendations are: continued absence of a cohesive national policy to encourage and accommodate defections represents a missed opportunity to withdraw Boko Haram/Islamic State in West Africa Province (BH/ISWAP) fighters from the battlefield, to bring Nigeria in line with international law and best practices, and to begin the reintegration process in the Northeast. Necessity of establishing "humanitarian space" has been even more important with the planned return of IDPs. Legal standards for detainment of defectors and those suspected of being associated with BH/ISWAP must comply with international legal instruments. Legal definition of a 'defector', 'surrendered', and 'captured' being necessary for any further progress, followed by the introduction of adequate screening and vetting procedures. Persons not detained by the military or 'released' back to communities for reintegration undergo this process amid a complex humanitarian crisis. Reintegration occurs with no CVE or preventing extremism (PE) strategies and planning in place. The reintegration process is usually reserved for a post-conflict environment when there is 'reintegration' space for 'defectors' and other persons in need of recovery. Over-reliance on traditional individually focused 'reinsertion' output driven activities, such as vocational training (VT), may be 'masked' as reintegration. This approach may violate the 'do no harm' principle and act as a further driver of conflict. Reintegration is a process where ex-combatants acquire civilian status, which is part of the general development of the country and necessitates long-term assistance. If this is overlooked efforts may exacerbate initial grievances that initially led individuals to join BH/ISWAP.

# MISSION OBSERVATIONS

## Change of Mission focus

Following upon recommendations from the November 2015 joint UK/US assessment, the current mission was to assist the GON in compiling numerous existing NE strategies, into one coherent national strategy. The planned entry point for this task was the planned January 25<sup>th</sup> 2015 national conference on the northeast, under the leadership of PCNI. Upon arrival, USAID was informed that the national conference was postponed to an unknown date. During the same time, the focus of the GON was directed towards implementing the RPBA, a key assessment shaping the nature of future interventions and future national and international strategies, in the short, mid and long term. The Vice President's Office is leading the implementation.

Therefore, the immediate objective was to assist the RPBA delegations in considering CVE and defectors programs and related issues by contributing to the work of the “Component 2: Peace building, Stability and Social Cohesion” and secondly, rapidly assess the current situation regarding CVE programs, including defections, also known as the “soft approach” in Nigeria, as well as, provide and offer assistance to GON in this area.

## General context and CVE

It seems that the current notion of military success against BH/ISWAP have led some key leadership in the GON to believe that CVE activities are not as necessary as they were before these military “successes”, and many believe that the military offensive, since it has been successful so far, will eventually defeat BH by force. It is also possible that other factors, beyond committed atrocities, such as growing religious and ethnic divide in the northeast are reinforcing such a vendetta mentality.

To understand this notion it is important to consider that the whole concept of social cohesion, co-existence or pardon is a social taboo that very few are raising and even fewer are publicly speaking about. The current political climate is such that politicians are afraid of being associated with perceived ‘sympathy’ with insurgents and thus refrain from raising these issues. While there is no universal solution to this problem, even more worrisome is that there is no public debate over these concerns, thus very few indigenous ideas or options exist. Overall there are rare public debates over returns or the “the day after” when BH/ISWAP is pushed from the territory, or more likely pushed underground. Nor, there is no further thought about what are going to be the preconditions for displaced communities return and reintegration, including those who were living under BH/ISWAP occupation or even those who were forcefully mobilized or associated one way or another.

While everybody in the northeast is affected by terrorism or the governmental response, there is no clear definition of the victim, nor is there an ongoing advocacy process to establish one. After visiting the Victims Support Fund (VSF), it was noted that VSF activities could be described as early recovery, livelihood and psychosocial support, focusing only on ‘special need groups’ rather than on focused intervention on the various victims. This finding is key to understand the complexity of the issue, as the victim definition implies a legal status of the individual. The definition is key to recovery for two reasons, first enabling victims to be identified and classified facilitating a compensatory process (material or social) or some form of individual recovery, and secondly, mapping the victim implies mapping the perpetrator, facilitating not only the delivery of justice, but through acknowledging its status a form of social recognition to the victim. While the actual justice delivery may be very complicated in such cases and often rarely delivered, the recognition of the victim has an important role in the political process that includes reintegration and peace building which is hoped to lead towards social cohesion.

In the absence of realistic public or political discussions on stabilizing the NE, in the midst of an active insurgency, various CVE related areas require further thought; defections, human rights, return, reintegration, pardon, coexistence, cohabitation, acceptance, restoration, defining the victims and their mapping and other politically sensitive issues, and a concept of approaching community based influential civil society members and organizations, including those faith based, can be considered.

Opinions contradicting the broader public notion of a military solution have also been heard. These voices point out that the limits of what the military can achieve have been reached and BH/ISWAP, while suppressed and weakened, hasn't been defeated.

As mentioned above, raising the issue of a soft approach, including CVE, seems not to be a politically popular topic and most interlocutors have mentioned the rejection of communities regarding possible ex-BH members or associated people's returns. Although not confirmed, we heard of extrajudicial killings of defectors and BH associated community members.

Most, if not all including practitioners agree that BH/ISWAP can't be defeated only by the use of force and are in agreement that, among other things, a mechanism facilitating defections should be set. Further, all interlocutors see much more community based CVE work, explained below, necessary enabling safe and sustainable returns, specially with IDPs, women, youth and other vulnerable groups.

### **Addressing CVE as a cross cutting issue in Nigeria and what is CVE in Nigeria**

Nigerian activities in countering violent extremism are not only a necessity to improving the situation on the ground, but are international obligations derived from Nigeria's membership in various multilateral organizations. Nigeria is a member and was chair of the United Nations Counter Terrorism Committee (UNCTC), as well as, a member of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum led by the US since 2011. As such Nigeria is signatory to Rome and Accra memorandums, outlining 25 best practices including reintegration. The NSA "soft approach" policy, set in the National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) from June 2014 is based upon these experiences, and is in line with some elements of the UN Preventing Violent Extremism plan rolled out in January 2016.

In the Nigerian context, the crisis in the northeast is defined by the insurgency and terrorism, perpetrated by BH/ISWAP. While Islamic ideology has been identified as a prime drive of the insurgency, the proliferations of small arms and light weapons, as well as, largely available quantities of narcotics<sup>2</sup> could also be fueling the conflict and negatively impacting on future peace building and recovery activities. Due to the insurgency nature of the crisis, but also other factors fueling the crisis, CVE should be incorporated into peace building and recovery programming considering all particularities of the Nigerian northeast scenario. Currently there are different interpretations of what CVE activities are, and should be in a Nigerian peace building and recovery context and within an active insurgency. One of the most common misapprehensions when CVE is mentioned in Nigeria is an immediate association to the Niger Delta Amnesty<sup>3</sup>.

So far, governmental CVE activities, from the previous administration, were loosely designed to counter radicalization, defections and deradicalization of those in the legal system, however CVE in the Nigerian context should be extended to areas of peace building and reintegration of various categories, including

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<sup>2</sup> Mentioned narcotics include: Opioids such as Tramol, DF118 and Dapson; Sedatives, Diazem and Benylin; and local drugs such as Janke and marijuana infused with chemicals.

<sup>3</sup> Amnesty is an official pardon for people who have been convicted of political offenses.

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/amnesty>. In the Nigerian context reference is made to Nigeria's 2009 Niger Delta Amnesty program. <http://www.usip.org/publications/what-s-next-security-in-the-niger-delta>

internally displaced persons (IDPs), civilian joint task force (CJTF), defectors and BH/ISWAP associated persons. It is also important that justice or transitional justice play a significant role in that process.

While there is no formally accepted definition, countering violent extremism (CVE) can be described as activities to prevent the advocating, engaging in, preparing, or otherwise supporting ideologically motivated or justified violence to further social, economic and political objectives.

Under current circumstances CVE programing should address issues at the individual and community level as well as Federal, State and Local Government Areas institutional levels.

While CVE programming itself should focus on “pull”<sup>4</sup> factors, decisive actions should be taken to diminish “push”<sup>5</sup> factors contributing to individuals joining BH/ISWAP. From this perspective, recovery could fail and development delayed, if CVE doesn’t target real pull factors beyond “root causes” and socio and economic recovery

Social and economic injustice and poverty is only one push factor, however, not directly contributing to violent extremism, rather in an indirect way creating conditions for possible recruitment.

Political factors play a central role in terrorist motivation, such as, perceived impunity through corruption of political elites, gross violations of human rights, extremely heavy handed approaches by security forces, denial of political expression, and poor governance or disenfranchised political elites are all arguments used for insurgent recruitment. Other arguments include perceived or real corruption among the religious and traditional institutions that failed to check the excesses of political leaders.

The motivation or “pull” factors often lies with area-based particularities, such as the history of the Kanem-Borno empire and its traditional link to Islam and the rest of the Islamic world, for example through traditional Trans-Saharan Trade routes. However, it is through the notion of the Ummah or the “worldwide Islamic community” that members of a local community are connected to global events that can facilitate their recruitment. In modern interconnected global societies, perceived injustices to other Islamic communities are influential mobilization factors. Protracted conflicts in Nigeria, but also those globally (such as, Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya or Syria) are, providing the “undeniable proof” of a global conspiracy, or, in a best-case scenario, of a crusade against Islam. Considering this, some sects of BH/ISWAP’s paradigm, in terrorism can be summarized as “think globally act locally”. Also, colonial history combined with local and global perceptions of economic suppression or national political and economic elites inheriting the same repressive system is creating fertile ground for contempt.

However none of these elements, even if assumed true, single or combined, cannot create an insurgent through an “evolution” process. The catalytic factor, used by skilled and charismatic leader/s, in this case through religious ideology is creating this deadly combination.

CVE is a necessary cross cutting tool to address issues fuelling the insurgency, in a comprehensive manner, including drivers beyond socio economic, recovery and development. In failing to do so, none of the stabilization, recovery or development efforts are going to succeed alone. If pull factors are not addressed, above-mentioned factors will remain and will eventually influence all other initiatives. This can have serious security implications to Nigeria in particular, the entire region and with a great possibility beyond. Even today, large areas of the northeast are not accessible to (national and international) civilian

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<sup>4</sup> Pull factors include membership benefits, appeal of a ‘leader’ or resonance of ideas from history, society or culture. [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnadt978.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnadt978.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Push factors are known as “underlying/root causes” such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, discrimination, and/or marginalization, or else, creating environmental conditions for the pull factors to be successful. [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/pnadt978.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnadt978.pdf)

humanitarian and development actors. Failure to address these issues may lead to a superficial notion of victory, leading to an expansion of instability countrywide. Therefore, it is perhaps more important “how” (rather than “what”) the recovery (RPBA) will be implemented, addressing some of issues mentioned above.

Current political and military advances (elections and the military offensive) have already contributed to narrowing the insurgency, resulting in dissonant voices and although not confirmed, possibly some calls for negotiations, coming from some BH/ISWAP commanders.

Ideologically indoctrinated individuals are drivers of the insurgency and its backbone. However, beyond these hard-core members, large portions of the insurgents have mixed motives for participation. While there is no doubt that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible to change individual convictions of hard-core insurgents, through counter narratives or de-radicalization programs, a particular attention should be directed towards those other mixed motives. Those mixed motives, among other things, can be the availability of narcotics or financial benefits through criminal activity. A way forward for Nigeria would be to make extremist arguments politically and socially irrelevant, isolating the hard-core and cutting popular support to insurgency.

Such dissonant voices should be carefully considered, if true and legitimate, possibly used to facilitate the atomization process of the group. This in no way should be done at the detriment of justice. Furthermore, if used well, insurgency splinters could be a window of opportunity for a measured approach towards individuals and groups. Overall, on level of commanders or foot soldiers, an organized and well-implemented alternative option for those who wish to leave, is in no way a sign of weakness, on the contrary it is a sign of strength in victory, and a demonstration of a functional state, a key notion to be used in sidelining the terrorist ideology.

#### *Reversing the trend and creating a favorable environment for CVE programs*

Beyond defining CVE as program interventions, as mentioned above, targeting specific push and pull factors, the overall environment is also affecting the success of these programs. The impression is that the GON has lost some of its legitimacy in the eyes of some populations in the northeast, due to a number of factors. Such perceptions have been further exacerbated by the GON having a reactive and not proactive policy regarding the insurgency triggered crisis and secondly through the perception of poor crisis management and its consequences. One of the results is the deprivation of human dignity for many internally displaced populations in affected areas, leading to a loss of trust in the GON and its institutions. Many have described living conditions of IDPs as below any level of human dignity.

Therefore, for CVE programs to be successful, they will have to be implemented within a sincere and trustful national policy aiming to restore human dignity of populations in the northeast. It is only in such an environment that CVE programming can be successful in marginalizing the insurgents.

For a successful implementation of CVE in Nigeria three national frameworks can greatly facilitate this effort by creating a favorable environment for CVE implementation. These include the political, the legal and the institutional framework. These frameworks are to politically promote and address, legally define and through national institutions programmatically implement activities aimed to counter violent extremism in Nigeria. A careful conflict sensitivity or Do No Harm approach should be implemented in all programming in order to not exacerbate the dynamics.



## **Institutional capacity**

In the past, despite its advisory role, ONSA also implemented a limited defector program. Inquiring into this program was part of the focus of the previous joint UK/US mission in November 2015. Latest shifts in policy have refocused ONSA on its initial advisory role to the President and to relevant national institutions. This policy change is also intended to introduce line ministries as implementation bodies for governmental run CVE programs. In this way it is planned for line ministries to implement programs that were previously implemented by ONSA. This situation will create more questions on the capacity of these ministries to implement such activities or coordinate effectively between the Federal and State levels. Nevertheless, the advisory role to the President and other specific tasks of ONSA remain opaque, to date the organization is trying to redefine itself and its future role.

Amongst new roles to be assigned to line ministries and other national institutions, the National Counter Terrorism Strategy (NACTEST) will be deconstructed, appropriate components further developed, detailed and “allocated” to relevant line ministries. Line ministries, in the future, might be tasked to implement CVE related activities. However since line ministries have not been formally identified and their tasks specified, it is not clear whom in the GON is working to deconstruct the national strategy, if that process has begun and what the progress is thus far.

Due to corruption charges by the new administration all ONSA’s key leadership were let go, effectively stopping further implementation.

ONSA’s institutional transition was difficult. The situation effectively slowed down or made almost impossible for any programing effort. Elements that affected such a difficult transition, beyond the electoral power shift, are mostly related to previous irregular activities ranging from negligence to corruption. It seems that many employment contracts were issued without necessary documentation; many contracts with service providers were not made in a competitive nor transparent process, or with entities that even legally registered, thus forcing the current leadership to nullify most of everything. Although the effects of such a transition are harmful, one could argue that the previous programs were implemented merely on an experimental and ad hoc scale to begin with.

While previous program delivery was on a pilot scale, compared to national needs, it is worth mentioning that the EU, UK<sup>6</sup> as well as national partners have invested significant funds and energy in creating the national capacity within ONSA, namely within the programs in the field, defections, judiciary and prison services. If CVE programs were to be pursued in Nigeria it would be beneficial to preserve and build upon existing achievements.

With the dissolution ONSA’s implementation capacity, and its re-appropriation of the advisory role on CVE matters, an institutional gap regarding the implementation of CVE and defectors programs seems to have been identified.

During the November 2015 mission it was observed that national efforts were perceived to operate “in silos” or “compartmentalized”. This has only been confirmed during the current mission. The current ONSA restructuring is aimed to improve that, however due to limited capacity, this intra governmental cooperation has been a challenge. While unable to coordinate efforts internally on the federal level, between PCNI, ONSA, VPs office, line ministries and the military, it seems that the coordination between federal and state level is even more complex.

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<sup>6</sup> Backed by the Terrorism Prevention Amendment Act of 2013, ONSA is working with the UK’s Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) on a Policy Framework and National Action Plan for CVE in Nigeria.

## **1st Consultative Meeting for North East Programming**

Several substantive issues were identified during this mission. First, a lack of clear understanding on the complexity and need of CVE programming and implementation needs by the GON, second, no clear understanding of what CVE programs should consist of in the Nigerian context, and third, the actual implementation capacity and a plan to build up the capacity of relevant GON implementers.

To remedy this USAID identified an opportunity to facilitate a meeting of all national and international key stakeholders programming in the northeast. The objective was to gather all relevant actors in one place so they can meet and have a clear understanding on the various roles and programming, as it relates to the NE. At the same time, if the meeting proved a success it could evolve in a programming platform serving the purpose for coordination and moving towards a more cohesive CVE framework.

Preparations for the meeting were detailed, including the design of a concept note, agenda and invitation letter. Meetings with national stakeholders, PCNI, ONSA and the MOI, as well as, international actors confirmed the need for such a meeting. During preparations, GON received this initiative with great interest and support, reviewed materials and endorsed the meeting. USAID offered the meeting to be organized by ONSA but they declined, stating a lack of capacity and inflated bureaucracy to move forward quickly. ONSA specified that for them to organize the meeting they needed two working weeks just to send invitations officially, a fact speaking for itself. Also, ONSA expressed interest and later commitment for USAID to host the first meeting and ONSA to continue hosting the subsequent ones. Therefore it was named, 1st Consultative Meeting for North East Programming. OTI provided financial and logistical assistance in organizing the meeting, including the conference hall, coffee breaks, lunch and note takers.

The meeting took place on February 25<sup>th</sup> 2016, a separate note detailing the meeting is available. The vast majority of those invited came and took active participation. Objectives were met successfully. The meeting consisted of practitioners, not high political officials. The aim being to create a platform where individuals and respective institutions could meet and get together, as well as, open a dialogue on cooperation or challenging issues. Among others, representatives from the MOI, VPs Office, PCNI, ONSA, Police, Military, National Orientation Agency (NOA), Attorney General's Office, Budget and plan, Prison Services, Center for Democracy Development (CDD), National Defense College, VSF, Institute of Peace & Conflict Resolution (IPCR), OCHA, UNDP, UNICEF, UN, UK and Swiss participated to the meeting.

During this meeting two substantive initiatives, beneficial for CVE implementation in the Northeast were announced: the Attorney General's Office initiative on Human Rights, envisaging the establishment of an Inquiry Panel for the Northeast (duration of 12 months) under Human Rights Commission and, the MOI's, Civilian Protection Program, described as a comprehensive plan that focuses on restoration of dignity to human lives across the nation with a speedy delivery through the justice sector.

# WAY FORWARD

## Previous assessment US/UK mission

All recommendations from the joint UK/US assessment in November 2015 are still valid, and national appropriation of these efforts should be further encouraged and assisted.

## Civil Military cooperation

This mission was focused on civilian activities, mostly ONSA, PCNI and some civil society organizations; however, civil military cooperation remains a key factor. The continuous follow up of the adoption of the national Civil Military (Cimic) doctrine remains a priority. The doctrine was finalized in May 2015, however it hasn't been formally adopted yet. The content of the doctrine, its annexed training curriculum and lessons learned would be beneficial for CVE programming.

## Political and legal frameworks

Considering the three national frameworks necessary for CVE (political, legal and institutional frameworks) and assuming that the legal framework is under consideration by the Attorney's general Office and the Ministry of Interior is considering to launch an initiative to address some social justice issues, it would be key to a) continue to motivate highest national authority to promote a political framework and b) follow up closely with the Attorney General's Office the legal framework creation. In addition, it would be beneficial to explore the Human Rights mechanisms set to look into human rights abuse, as these will have a crucial role to play in demonstrating the rule of law achievements to populations.

## Institutional framework and program support

Continue to foster relations with all stakeholders active in the northeast and particularly follow up with ONSA's institutional development. Another lesson learned from the meeting held in the Hilton is that USAID would benefit from increased mobility of staff to have more semi formal and informal contacts with stakeholders and be more present in the daily mingling routine, beyond office formalities. It goes without saying that it should be done with respect of all security rules and regulations.

## Programming level

- Continue to assist ONSA in managing Consultative Meetings for Northeast Programming and facilitate its evolution towards a well-established coordination mechanism. In cooperation with the Swiss/CDD run Political Forums a strong coordination and programming platform can be established. In such case the ONSA/USAID meeting can serve as a programming and coordination platform, while the Swiss/CDD forums can serve as a wider civil society, scholar and wider public area to test ideas and concepts. A two-way communication between these forums can be very beneficial to the programming process and dialogue for the northeast. Another benefit is that while the USAID/ONSA meeting is a formal programming tool, the Swiss/CDD forum can serve as a semi formal proofing ground, and a politically neutral platform,
- Use the established platform to coordinate and synergize announced efforts, as discussed during the 1st Consultative Meeting for Northeast Programming,
- USAID to motivate, advise and assist if requested, ONSA to define what is CVE in Nigeria and outline a comprehensive program framework. This should be an evidence-based and area-based exercise, as much as possible, if necessary additional studies can be commissioned to provide necessary data, however, it should be a time bound exercise.

- Once ONSA has defined the program framework, USAID to motivate, advise and assist ONSA, if requested in identifying essential interventions and evaluate what can be realistically implemented.
- USAID to motivate, advise and assist ONSA to identify implementation gaps and assistance needs.
- USAID to follow up with UNICEF and the British Council's Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Program, regarding their efforts to begin research on children associated with armed groups (both JAS and Civilian Joint Task Force/vigilante groups). The research will enable UNICEF and partners to design appropriate community-based reintegration and peace building programs for children under 18 years of age. In many countries, child soldier programs precede DDR activities; therefore it is essential to monitor potential developments in this program area.

## **Community level**

Community based activities can be area-based with initial pilot projects targeting specific affected areas. As it seems that the vendetta mentality is predominant in the general public, it would be fair to assume that communities feel similar. Therefore, any community based social cohesion or CVE related activities should be well prepared or run the risk of being rejected by the communities:

- USAID to establish a road map and detail expected outcome of the community engagement. This outcome may vary and can be an information exchange and communication exercise, leading to project development.
- USAID to engage relevant authorities and get their buy-in and support.
- Have sincere and open discussions with community leaders; present the road map and expected outcomes.
- Seek their support and assess what is necessary for leaders to raise issues related to CVE as specified in the road map, within communities. If expected outcomes cannot be reached in the given timeframe, in cooperation with community leaders design a "theory of change" concept leading to community acceptance.
- Assess the feasibility of necessary community support – can it be done?